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MODERN FEMINISM AND SEX ANTAGONISM

By ETHEL COLQUHOUN

The Woman Movement. By Ellen Key. Translated by M. B. Borthwick. Putnam, 1912.
Woman and Labor. By Olive Schreiner. London: Unwin, 1911.

Woman and Economics. By C. P. Gilman. Putnam, 1908.

Woman and Tomorrow. By W. L. George. London: Jenkins, 1913.

The Nature of Woman. By J. L. Tayler. London: Fifield, 1912.

John and Irene. By W. H. Beveridge. Longmans, 1912.

Sex Antagonism. By Walter Heape. London: Constable, 1913.

Woman in Modern Society. By Earl Barnes. London: Cassells, 1912.

A Survey of the Woman Problem. By Rosa Mayreder. Translated by H. Scheffauer. London: Heinemann, 1913.

I

IN a lucid little introduction to Ellen Key's latest book, Mr. Havelock Ellis, after tracing the broad lines on which the Woman's Movement has developed, suggests that it is now entering a critical period. This view is evidently shared by most of the writers on modern feminism, including some who are not likely to exaggerate the symptoms. The avowed feminist and the declared anti-feminist are both, of course, concerned to show that society is in a parlous state, either for want of, or because of, some readjustment of social relations on feminist lines which one desires and the other deprecates. We are too much accustomed to writers whose obvious desire is to 'make our flesh creep,' to pay much attention to jeremiads from either camp; and indeed the vast majority of men and women are sunk in too deep a sense of personal security to be capable of any very keen anxiety as to the future. The more thoughtful, however, and even some who are not usually thoughtful, have been shaken from indifference by recent developments of feminism. The suffrage campaign is only (on the surface) a by-product of feminism, and militancy is (on the surface) merely a by-product of suffragism; but evolution from feminism to

suffragism and from suffragism to militancy is too fundamental to permit that the last phase should be treated as a sporadic outburst.

The average man was not aware of feminism until the persistent advertising methods of the militant suffragette focussed attention on the woman movement. Now he is uncomfortably conscious of something stirring in the other sex which makes for change—exactly what kind of change neither sex seems to know; but it is certain that, in the words of Mr. Heape, 'man's opinion of woman has been definitely modified; his attitude towards her as an integral component of society can never be the same again.' On the other hand, woman's attitude to man has suffered (in certain classes of society) a no less definite modification; and the result is a somewhat acute phase in the long conflict of the sexes.

Few writers on feminism appear to realize that social evolution must have its roots in natural law, and even when they do, they are apt, like Mrs. C. P. Gilman, to ignore certain facts and pervert others in an almost grotesque fashion. Mr. Walter Heape, who treats the subject of sex relations from a biological standpoint, does

not get much further than a statement of the elements of the problem. He is a biologist and not a sociologist. His diagnosis of the condition of unrest which, today, permeates all civilized society is nevertheless particularly clear. He traces it to three sources, racial, class and sex antagonism; and he believes the last to be by far the most dangerous, since it is practically family war, and family quarrels are proverbially the most bitter. He agrees with Mr. Havelock Ellis that the movement is entering on a new and critical phase—a conclusion which few students of feminism will doubt, having in view not only the excesses of a section of women and the change of attitude in both sexes, but the general anarchic trend of feminist literature and the wide extension of doctrines calculated to foster sex-antagonism among the very class which is destined to provide the teachers and models of the next generation.

It is a corrective to the somewhat gloomy perspective opened out by feminist literature to turn to Mr. Beveridge's 'John and Irene.' When one is obsessed by the apparently new and insoluble problems presented, one can find infinite consolation in this anthology of thoughts on woman. By quotations which range from Hesiod, the prophet Esdras and the Laws of Manu down to Miss Cicely Hamilton and the report of the Registrar-General for 1910, Mr. Beveridge nearly convinces us that there is no new woman, nor new woman's movement, nor anything new to be said about woman and her movement. At the same time, in the allegory which is the prelude to the anthology, Mr. Beveridge sounds one uncertain note; and it is to the implied question that one returns.

The allegory sets forth how John, a convinced and ardent feminist, fell in love with Irene, whose wise and careful upbringing had preserved her, hitherto, from

serious thought about anything. With the imprudence of the reformer who can never let well alone, John

'began to educate her about Woman's cause. . . . She became filled with the delight of reasoning and understanding; she seized on and held her first conclusions with the dogmatism of the undergraduate, and was prepared to sacrifice everything to philosophy. John, on the other hand . . . was a perfectly normal person desiring to govern his own life in normal ways.'

The exact nature of their disagreement is not revealed, but it culminated in the incineration, by John, of a volume believed to be the work of Mr. Bernard Shaw.

'They parted in anger that afternoon and would not meet again. Irene . . . stepping into John's place in the (feminist) ranks, has bought the feminist library which he has sold, and John, who cannot dance, has again been seen at dances. . . . So the story ends for the present on a note of hope renewed.'

The note is an uncertain one. John, it is true, will get himself a wife, a hearth, domestic joys, and live the normal life of the normal man. He will accept meekly, nay blindly, the yoke of his normal spouse. He will accept his share of the burden of carrying on the world's work on what he believes to be his own terms.* That they are not really his own may never occur to him, so long as his manhood is at once satisfied and exercised by his family relations. But what of Irene? Is she to be permanently contented with a feminist library and a cause?

Feminism, like socialism, is difficult to confine within the boundaries of a formula. Mr. W. L. George in 'Woman and Tomorrow' has done what is possible in this direction. Feminism, he says is, broadly, the furthering of the interests of woman, philosophically the levelling of the sexes, and specifically the social and political

* 'Women have obtained their places in the world because they are desired by men on grounds which are not of the highest ethical quality; but these are the only grounds on which men will consent to . . . carrying on the burden of a society, about whose invention they were not consulted.' ('Essays in Fallacy,' Dr. Macphail, p. 96.)

emancipation of woman. Broadly therefore, many writers, such as Ruskin, or Dr. J. L. Tayler, are feminists, though they accept neither the philosophy nor its specific application; while a large number of writers with a feminist bias, from Montaigne to Mazzini, might have accepted the philosophy but would probably have hesitated over the specific application of their theories. The modern feminist, particularly the female feminist, is distinguished by her attempt to reduce these theories and generalities to everyday practice.* In pursuit of this aim she may, like Irene, be forced to break off relations with the other sex, she may view the privileges of her sex as badges of degradation, and she may, in the pursuit of spiritual and political emancipation, find it necessary to place herself on the level of male criminals. Not having troubled much over the inductive processes by which her conclusions were reached, Irene—that is Woman—conceives of them as something final and incontrovertible. John, who had been brought up by a managing mother and exacting sisters, theorises with some self-complacency ('it rather pleased him to think of himself as an hereditary grand oppressor') on the equality of the sexes. Irene, with the practical, concrete vision of her sex, asks for its definite expression in the shape of a reformed marriage service, 'economic independence,' or a new conception of sexual relations. The keynote to these new relations is to be found in the word 'individualism.' The weekly newspaper, now a bi-weekly, which holds the fort of advanced feminism in England, declares itself to be 'the only journal of recognized standing expounding a doctrine of philosophic individualism.' The German feminist, Rosa Mayreder, speaks

of progressive persons as those who live their lives in freedom 'undisturbed by the opinion or conduct of the society to which they belong.' The woman movement is to her 'the battle for the rights of an unfettered personality.' Woman, says the Swedish feminist, Ellen Key,* has suddenly discovered that instead of moving forward, as heretofore, only in and with the general progress, she can increase her own motion by self-assertion. 'Today young girls live to apply the principle of the woman movement—individualism.'

These words are significant when we remember the reiterated feminist claim that women must be free to 'live their own lives,' to 'develop their personality,' instead of being merged in the family and regarded only as a part of it. Among arguments brought forward in favor of woman's possible independence are some culled from natural history. The 'domestic slave' or 'servant wife' or 'female parasite' is reminded of the high estate of her sex in geological ages when 'puny, pygmy, parasitic males struggled for existence, and were used or not, as it happened, like a half-tried patent medicine.' Or she is told to find comfort in the female cirriped, who carried a few extra husbands in her scales 'lest she should lose one or two,' and in the ferocious spider, who uses her hapless little mate 'to coldly furnish forth a marriage breakfast' (sic).† She may even find satisfaction in the theories of some biologists who believe that life began with and was carried for some distance by the female organism; ‡ or that the 'male element . . . on its initial appearance was primarily an excrescence, a superfluity, a waste product of nature . . . strictly speaking, man is undeveloped woman.'§ To an average person it may appear extraordi-

* 'These qualities of mind naturally drive women to literary interests which are concrete, personal and emotional. Men turn more easily . . . to the abstract generalisations of science.' (Earl Barnes, 'Woman in Modern Society.')

* Ellen Key, 'The Woman Movement,' p. 97.

† C. P. Gilman, 'Woman and Economics.'

‡ Lester Ward, 'Pure Sociology.'

§ F. Swiney, 'Awakening of Women,' p. 19.

nary that feminists should feel obliged to grope so far back, or go to such lengths in order to give a woman 'a guid conceit o' hersel'.'

There is another line of attack which seems equally inconclusive. A favorite argument for those who feel it necessary to explain woman's comparatively few achievements in the world of art and science is to assert that her mentality has been suppressed by man—that she has had neither education nor opportunity. As some of the greatest work done by men has been accomplished in the teeth of exactly these difficulties, the argument does not carry us far, but there is really no agreement among feminists on this point. Olive Schreiner, for instance, asks nothing better than that women should regain the status enjoyed by their Teutonic foremothers of twenty centuries ago. In 'The Subjection of Woman' J. S. Mill asserts confidently that from the days of Hypatia to the Reformation, with the possible exception of Heloisa, women 'did not concern themselves with speculation at all'—an amazing generalization which colors his whole conclusions. Prof. Barnes also suffers from the delusion that female 'education' began about 1850; but Ellen Key is quite prepared to allow that

'numbers of women had appeared who, in classic culture, in the practice of learned professions, in political, religious, intellectual or æsthetic pursuits, stood beside the men of Humanism, the Renaissance or the Reformation.'*

In short, the biological and historical sketches with which many feminists preface their philosophy cannot be taken very seriously. They have been made to illustrate theories rather than to assist in forming them. Even Dr. J. L. Tayler, whose sane and sober little book has an air of reality lacking in most feminist lit-

erature, is inclined to build up his conclusions on biological premises which are, to say the least, controversial. Also, at the crucial point in the development of his argument, he introduces an altogether empirical value—his conception of the meaning of 'bloom' as applied to women. It is true he does not define 'bloom' too closely, but he certainly leaves the impression that it connotes a surface quality of innocence, purity or modesty, and as our standards of these are matters of geography and social custom, varying with class, latitude or period, it is difficult to follow him. The fruit analogy, so dear to sentimentalists of last century, is, in fact, hardly worthy of a place in a serious book on the woman problem. What we are concerned with is the soundness and ripeness of the fruit—its perfection of maturity—without which 'bloom' is deceptive and useless. Nevertheless there are many wise things in Dr. Tayler's book; his chapter on female education is specially valuable and suggestive, and he has done a real service to the student of feminine psychology in reprinting part of a powerful essay by W. C. Roscoe, first published in the 'National Review' for October, 1858...

The first concentration of feminist efforts on a practical basis is found in the struggle which opened for women the door to higher education and levelled up the teaching of girls and boys. Sixty years ago, when the fight was beginning, there was an exaggerated belief in the value of book-learning, not only among women but among those who looked forward to an 'educated democracy.' Hitherto book-learning had been confined to a small minority of the nation; and among these the line between the sexes had gradually become markedly favorable to men. Colleges, schools and endowments, originally intended for both sexes, were restricted to one; and women specialized more and

* In 'Six Mediæval Women' Mrs. Kemp Welch shows that culture in the Middle Ages was more easy of acquisition by women than by men.

more in those arts and crafts which had their centre in the home. Nevertheless the women of the upper classes certainly acquired somehow a culture which made them quite as interesting and interested as any college-bred girl of today. Read the letters, not even of the brilliant French women of the 18th century salons, but of the country-bred English women of the late 18th and early 19th centuries—Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Frances Lady Shelley, Lady Elizabeth Coke, Lady Sarah Spencer Lyttleton, Lady Dorothy Nevill — not 'blue-stockings,' but ordinary society women, and you will find in them not only a keen appreciation of the events of their own time, but a humorous judgment and a critical faculty applied to books, music, and the conversation of their friends. How many a young society lady of today, writing lively and entertaining letters to a midshipman brother, would recommend for his reading Sully's 'Memoires,' or quote Madame de Stael? When we are estimating the gains and losses from the point of view of feminine advancement of the last half-century, we may well ask ourselves whether, among the hosts of clever women-writers of today, there are any names worthy to be placed beside those of Jane Austen, Charlotte and Emily Bronte, George Eliot, Mrs. Oliphant, Mrs. Brown-ing, and Mrs. Gaskell; and yet these are all middle-class women of a period which is supposed to have seen a complete eclipse in female education.*

At the same time it is only fair to suppose that, while talent, character and genius may have triumphed over an environment not specially favorable, the latter was certainly a hard and stony ground for less sturdy seeds. Especially in the

middle class, which was growing to wealth and power during the first half of the 19th century, the social conditions placed women at a disadvantage. Boys had to make their way in the world without the help of those family influences which could be safely relied on in the upper classes; hence money spent on their equipment was regarded as a good investment. The same argument did not apply to girls, who, educated or not, would generally marry, or, if they remained single, would still be a charge on their men-folk. The increased dependence, uselessness, and luxury of this class of women was an important factor in the early days of the woman movement, and still constitutes a serious social problem—not to be met by turning out girls to do men's and boys' work in an inferior manner. Feminism therefore concentrated on that education which was believed to be the *open-sesame* to all kinds of new worlds for women as for men.

Amid a great deal of futile talk about the relative intellectual capacity of men and women, the battle of higher education was fought and won; but the argument which prevailed with the British paterfamilias was not the favorite contention that the educated woman would be a better mother and more the companion and equal of her husband. The pioneers of female education in this country, and English women in general, are apt to have an exaggerated idea of man's desire and capacity for intellectual companionship while they consistently underestimate his needs in other respects. The British husband and father accepted the task of educating his daughters very nearly, if not quite, as expensively as his sons, because economic pressure and the growing standard of feminine expenditure convinced him that his girls might have to work for their living. Domestic labor being still cheap and academic honors believed to be the passport

* De Quincey, writing in 1840 ('Essay on Style'), and Macaulay, in his History published in 1848, declare that the educated women of their day speak and write 'purer and more graceful English' than is elsewhere to be found. (See 'John and Irene,' p. 165.) Can this be said of the high school and college-bred women of today?

to well-paid work, he felt he was doing the best thing for his girls, and they accepted the situation most conscientiously. School and college days—for the average girl—became not so much periods of mental and moral growth, as short and strenuous years in which the largest possible number of unrelated facts must be earnestly assimilated. A few women have taken high academic honors, to the great jubilation of those who desire to prove that 'there is no sex in brain—you might as well talk about a female liver,'* but serious doubts prevail, even in academic circles, as to the real value of the education for which so much is sacrificed.

At the present time, with the spread of high-schools and colleges taught by college-bred women all over the land, middle-class female education has been levelled up, very nearly, to male standards, with the important exception that the real educational value to boys of school and college life (which is not essentially connected with the amount of book-learning they absorb) is very largely absent from girls' schools. Prof. Barnes, after sixteen years' close association with co-education in the United States, makes some useful observations on the tendencies and effects of some three generations of education for women. He notes that no attempt has been made to evolve a distinctive type of education. With us, and in some American colleges, the women's part is merely an annexe to an old foundation; while in others, as in our newer universities, although men and women are admitted on the same footing, the courses have been framed to meet the needs of the male sex. It is true that 'domestic science' is now recognized by one or two of our newer universities as a regular subject, but it is still an excrescence, an alternative, to be adopted for commercial reasons, rather

than an essential feature in feminine education. Everywhere, in the United States as in England, the pioneers of female education seem to have aimed at approximating as closely as possible to male ideals, and this is the more to be regretted, says Prof. Barnes, since some women's colleges in America had unique opportunities for setting up their own standard.

The result in the United States, where co-education and the swamping of the teaching profession by women have made feminine influence paramount in the educational world, is not, so far, a stringing-up of the female to the male pitch, but a tendency to bring all education, and even journalism and literature, to a feminine level. 'Feminization means emphasis on languages, literature, and history, as opposed to mathematics, chemistry and civics'; a concentration on the practical and material as compared with the theoretic and speculative. Moreover, the egoistic, personal, and emotional note in journalism and fiction, though not to be attributed solely to woman's influence, certainly owes a great deal to it. Finally Prof. Barnes declares, 'Our present elementary schools, and still more our high-schools, lead girls neither to intelligent work nor to intelligent living as women.'

This indictment must be read in the light of the fact that Prof. Barnes is an avowed feminist, in favor of woman suffrage and the 'equality of the sexes.' Obviously he ought to be on the side of Herbert Spencer, who held 'the minds of women to be unlike [those of men] both quantitatively and qualitatively. I believe' (he said) 'the difference to result from a physiological necessity, and that no amount of culture can obliterate it.' The American writer, however, adopts only the first half of the hypothesis. Having demonstrated the persistent nature of feminine characteristics, and shown that so far from being

* C. P. Gilman, 'Woman and Economics'.

masculinized by education, education is feminized by them, he is still prepared to allow that the difference in male and female mentality 'might have been produced by environment and ideals, and may hence give way to education.' Without attempting to dogmatize on the vexed question of sex, it may be stated that both maleness and femaleness are inherited by each individual, the dominance of the one over the other determining the sex. Masculine qualities are not uncommon in women, nor feminine ones in men, but on what biological grounds is it assumed that the best type of female must approximate most closely to the male? And why should it be taken for granted that the world has no use for the characteristically feminine mentality? It is not a question of inferiority and superiority, but of difference in kind and function. There is no more startling evidence that modern women have got out of touch with reality than the low opinion some of them profess to entertain of their own natural functions, qualities, and place in society. The writer has heard a very clever and thoughtful woman regret that, although she had found great happiness in marriage and maternity, her engagement had cut short a promising academic career which might have opened out to original work. 'After all,' she said, 'anyone can have children!' At a famous high-school, some years ago, the news of the early marriage of a favorite old pupil was met with the comment, 'What a waste!' To Rosa Mayreder maternity is merely woman's handicap in the march of progress. Curiously enough, the subtlety of the feminine mind is able to find something meritorious in the performance of these lowly duties, so that she who submits to them is sometimes considered to be heroically sacrificing her higher possibilities on the altar of the family. We shall see presently to what conclusion this habit

of mind leads in the studies of an advanced feminist.

The prominence and admiration gained in public spheres nowadays by the child-free woman have created a spurious standard; and many women who would otherwise have been contented with their natural functions are utterly demoralized by the glare and glitter of the careers of their 'free and independent' sisters. Three factors keep the truth from coming out. First, the novelty of these careers has still glamour enough to blind those who follow them; secondly, they are too proud to confess, if they feel the emptiness of life; and thirdly, if Miss Cicely Hamilton is to be believed, we are really witnessing the development of a neuter sex, to which these women may belong. The 'efficiency' of such women is the subject of panegyrics by their own sex. In any case, the average house-keeping, motherly type of woman is now inclined to under-value her own work and sphere, and to believe that her brilliant unmarried or childless sister, who writes or speaks or does political, professional, or social work, is more useful, is having a 'fuller life,' than the mere wife and mother. It is a question of values. Feminists, as Ellen Key points out, are not essentially concerned to prove that women can do, or should do, the same work as men, but it is certainly along these lines that the modern feminist movement has developed.

Meanwhile, the main effect of modern education on women has been to complicate instead of to solve the economic question. The problem, 'What shall we do with our girls?' is keener now than ever; and, although conscientious parents strive, with many sacrifices, to make their daughters efficient economic units, as an alternative to matrimony, it cannot be said that their efforts are very successful. A vast range of occupations unknown to our grandmothers has opened out to the mod-

ern girl, but the fact remains that a school and college education, which has cost hundreds of pounds, may leave her with a lower market value than the 'uneducated' woman who can cook or do housework. Consequently, the economic gain of a self-supporting daughter or sister is more than balanced by the increased expense of education and housekeeping; and this last factor is a deterrent to matrimony, thus throwing an increasing number of women into the labour market, and thereby completing a vicious circle in the economic evolution of women.* Moreover, the spurious standard of which mention has been made compels in young women a superstitious reverence for book-learning and its academic reward. Those who can write letters after their names are inordinately puffed up by the privilege, although it is shared with thousands of obscure male persons. Very frequently they are unfitted by this distinction, both in their own opinion and that of their friends, for the humble career of wife and mother. The teaching profession naturally attracts a great proportion of those who are exceptionally gifted in passing examinations; and they sacrifice youth and health in order to obtain the necessary qualifications. Education is essentially, to them, a means to a definite end, which undoubtedly accounts for much that is peculiar to the women's side of our college life. But when the strain is over, and the coveted prize of a post as teacher is won, is it worth the price paid? A life full of minor irritations to all but the born teacher, restricted within narrow limits and often monotonous, with very few plums and a scale of remuneration leaving little margin for the pleasures of life—such is the vista opened out to all

save a favoured few who adopt teaching as a profession. It is not wonderful if discontent is rife among middle-class women when such conditions prevail. Unhappily it is to this class, on whom changing social conditions have laid such a heavy burden, that the young girls of today look for guidance and for their philosophy of life. There are many sane, healthy, and splendid women among them, but the conditions of life do not make for either breadth of view or depth of understanding among the majority; and it is to be regretted that the influence of mothers has been so largely superseded nowadays by that of the female celibate pedagogue.

The question of the mutual influence of modern education and the feminist movement is too wide to be fully discussed here, nor is there any intention, on the part of the writer, to condemn wholesale either the present system or the women it has produced. No one wishes to stereotype any kind of man or woman. Social changes require adaptation on the part of both sexes. What is striking to an observer is the reflection that, while men seem to be fitting in fairly comfortably to the conditions of modern life, seeking and finding careers overseas when no opening presents itself at home, growing steadier and more sober to meet the demands of a democratic society, women, on the contrary, are growing to be more and more at issue with their environment. The adaptability of the college-bred man in the colonies is a good illustration. He has been brought up as softly as his sister, yet whereas he can cheerfully start life again at the bottom of the social ladder by cleaning pigsties or ploughing fields, she can seldom face either the physical strain or the mental isolation involved by pioneer life. If these difficulties had not been faced by the women of an earlier generation, our empire would have been considerably smaller.

*Statistics do not show an increase in industrially employed women, relatively to the increase of population, but few people can doubt that the middle-class woman is being forced more and more by economic pressure to become a wage-earner.

Whatever boons higher education has brought to women, it does not seem to give them that elasticity of mind and body and that deftness of hand which make the truly adaptable person. Nor, if feminist writers are to be believed, has it brought them happiness. The despised Victorian woman, if one's recollections of her as an old lady are to be trusted, found a spiritual satisfaction in life which many of her grand-daughters seem to miss.

There is no need to elaborate the subject of the present discontent of women. The suffrage agitation is its keenest witness. If we listen to the arguments of suffragists, it is obvious that their emotion is altogether out of proportion to the grievances they advance. They fasten, it is true, upon the most terrible features of woman's life—the White Slave or the sweated worker; but it is frequently obvious that they know nothing of either, and that they have no clear idea of the remedies they would themselves apply to these evils. A passion of pity for their sex surges through them, for they choose to regard both classes of women as victims to man's cruelty. But beyond this vicarious suffering they have a difficulty in explaining exactly what is wrong with them, and yet their faces are witnesses to mental distress of no slight order. The banner of revolt against man has enlisted many women who have never received anything but kindness and consideration, and attracts today many young girls who know nothing of social evils or sweated workers. 'Why,' asks Dr. Tayler, 'when the young girl's mind opens out to the womanly, does a feeling of discontent with womanliness and its opportunities tend to arise?'

Such surface manifestations as the franchise agitation, the demand for increased occupational facilities, for a wider domestic horizon or for entire freedom from do-

mestic duties—all these are only superficial expressions of something deeper. Olive Schreiner speaks of '... dis-co-ordination, struggle and consequent suffering which undoubtedly do exist when we regard the world of sexual relations and ideals.'* But the most significant utterance comes from an American sociologist of strong feminist sympathies, Mr. Thomas, who says:

'Modern woman is in . . . a condition of constraint and unrest, which produces organic ravages for which no luxury can compensate. The American woman of the better classes has superior rights and no duties, and yet she is worrying herself to death—not over specific troubles, but because she has lost her connection with reality.'†

The essential truth of this statement is borne out by an accumulated weight of feminist evidence. In contact with the facts of nature, the truths of life, feminist philosophy breaks down utterly, or lands us in a quagmire of absurdities like Mrs. Gilman's picture of the home of the future, in which father and mother are equally concerned (or unconcerned), going off daily to their work and returning at night to find the house has been skilfully dealt with by 'experts,' while the baby has spent an improving day in the communal nursery. Everyone knows such homes, but no one, before Mrs. Gilman, had ventured to think them ideal. Before the elementary facts of maternity and woman's physiological needs such a vision fades at once, or remains only as a 'horrid warning' of what feminists mean by 'sex equality.' But, apart from such unattractive Utopias, feminist literature offers little to women as a solution of their difficulties. It will be seen that all these difficulties—the educational, social or economic—lead back to the starting-point of society—the relationship of the sexes. It is this which conditions all woman's activities.—*Quarterly Review, London.*

*J. L. Taylor, 'Nature of Woman.'

*Olive Schreiner, 'Woman and Labour.'

†Sex and Society, pp. 239-240.